

3. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] <sup>4</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, wherein adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges define a compression slot therebetween.

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>. (Amended) A [The] lock washer for use in a catheter connector, [of claim 1, further] comprising:

a ring defining a periphery of the lock washer; and  
a plurality of tube engagement flanges associated with and extending centrally from said ring, each of said tube engagement flanges having a central tip, central tips of at least selected ones of said plurality of tube engagement flanges defining a tube receptacle for receiving and retaining a tube within said lock washer; and

a collapsible[,] web disposed between adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges.

<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, wherein said tube engagement flanges are flexible towards the center of a plane [defined by] in which the periphery of said ring is located.

<sup>5</sup>/<sub>5</sub>. (Amended) The lock washer of claim <sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>, wherein [upon flexion of] said tube engagement flanges are configured to flex toward [towards] the center of said ring[,] to decrease the diameter of said tube receptacle[ decreases].

<sup>6</sup>/<sub>7</sub>. (Amended) The lock washer of claim <sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>, wherein, following the release of a compressive load from said lock washer periphery, said tube engagement flanges are configured to resiliently flex back to a relaxed state.

<sup>8</sup>/<sub>9</sub> <sup>10</sup>/<sub>10</sub>. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [9] <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, wherein, upon flexion of said adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges toward said ring, said web [collapses] is configured to collapse upon itself.

Sub C11  
B2  
914  
11. (Amended) The lock washer of claim 4, wherein, following flexion of said tube engagement flanges, said tube engagement flanges return to a relaxed state and said web [re-expands] is configured to re-expand to an original state.

12. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] ~~4~~, wherein each said central tip comprises a concave arc.

12 13 14. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [13] ~~15~~, wherein adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges define a compression slot therebetween.

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15. (Amended) A [The] lock washer[ of claim 13], [further] comprising:  
a ring defining a periphery of the lock washer;  
a plurality of resilient tube engagement flanges associated with said ring and extending therefrom, each of said tube engagement flanges having a relaxed state and an engaged state, and each including a central tip, said central tips of selected ones of said plurality of tube engagement flanges defining a tube receptacle through the lock washer for receiving a tube; and  
a web extending between and adjoining adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges.

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16. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [13] ~~15~~, wherein each of said tube engagement flanges [are] is proximally compressible with respect to said ring.

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17. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [17] ~~15~~, wherein[, upon applying a compressive load to said tube engagement flanges,] said tube engagement flanges are configured to flex into said engaged state under a compressive load.

15 16  
18. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [17] ~~15~~, wherein[, upon compression of] said tube engagement flanges are configured to compress toward the center of said ring to decrease[,] the inner diameter of said tube receptacle [decreases].